**Short Story Portfolio**

Tony Chen

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The Man He Killed by Thomas Hardy

Had he and I but met  
    By some old ancient inn,  
We should have set us down to wet  
    Right many a nipperkin!  
  
    But ranged as infantry,  
    And staring face to face,  
I shot at him as he at me,  
    And killed him in his place.  
  
    I shot him dead because—  
    Because he was my foe,  
Just so: my foe of course he was;  
    That's clear enough; although  
  
    He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,  
    Off-hand like—just as I—  
Was out of work—had sold his traps—  
    No other reason why.  
  
    Yes; quaint and curious war is!  
    You shoot a fellow down  
You'd treat, if met where any bar is,  
    Or help to half a crown.

<http://allpoetry.com/poem/8442929-The_Man_He_Killed-by-Thomas_Hardy> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blast/art_design/life_and_death_tree/66388>

The Cask of Amontillado

The narrator of the poem, similar to Montressor in *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allen Poe, kills a man that he only recently sees. The motif of both, also nearly identical, as each victim is a foe of the killer. They even share an analogous method of trapping their prey: by treating the victim well and tricking them into a false sense of friendship. Furthermore, neither killer gave a clear background to how this foeship came to be. They both only went as far as simply presenting the fact of its existence, while the rest is formulated through assumption, as they believe simply stating just that one fact of being foes is “clear enough.” However, it is safe to conclude that both the narrators of the poem and *The Cask of Amontillado* are quite unstable mentally, as they killed their foe so calmly and peacefully, almost joyfully.

The painting, titled “Life and Death Tree”, expresses the transition of a joyful festival to pure darkness seen in the short story *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allen Poe. Even the title itself symbolizes the idea of the story, where the story starts out bursting with life at a festival, and then transforms into a horrid truth of vengeful killing. Starting at the left side of the picture, one can see the tree in daylight with parrots (which relates back to the festival atmosphere at the beginning) flying around. This gives a feeling of happiness and that nothing would go wrong. However, the mood takes a sudden turn, as, progressing to the left side, the picture becomes dark, cloudy and the tree is completely barren. The crows perched on the dead branches foreshadow the possibility of death. That possibility, in time, does become a reality in the Montresor catacombs, when Fortunato is essentially buried alive.

Have I Made The Right Decision? by Sharon Vernon

Why do I feel in doubt? Have I made the right decision?  
You know how to make me happy, and my favorite position.  
You know when I am nervous, angry or sad.  
You alone are like the family I never had.  
  
To let you go now would break my heart.  
So why do I feel as though we will be better apart?  
Do I see you as a friend? Or my true love to be?  
I can't quite believe this is reality.  
  
I waited two years. It seemed so long  
And then suddenly it was on your arm where I felt I belonged.  
If you care and want me so  
Then promise you will never let me go.

<http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/the-right-decision#ixzz2OIJtvFLm>



“Christ Pantacrator” at St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai

The Lady or the Tiger

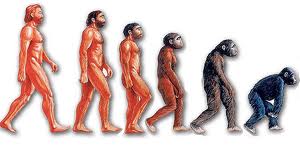
The poem shows the difficulties of making a decision, especially in the case of love. The princess, in *The Lady or the Tiger* by Frank Stockton, is torn between watching her lover eaten by a tiger or walk away with another woman. In the poem’s case, the narrator doesn’t know whether or not someone is just a friend or a true lover. The second stanza truly encompasses the princess’ dilemma of *how* her lover would leave her life. This shows the inevitable fact that no matter what she chooses, she will be left alone and abandoned due to her own decision. Throughout the story, she alternates between thoughts of the two possible choices; the narrator in the poem, likewise, expresses indecisive reasons to hate or to love the man. In addition, neither *The Lady or the Tiger* nor the poem give a clear-cut ending, or even a hint, as to their final decision.

The painting of the Christ Pantacrator at St. Catherine’s Monastery shows the two sides of Jesus Christ: godly on the left and human on the right. This could translate into the idea that the princess, in the short story *The Lady or the Tiger* by Frank Stockton, has to choose between her of savagery and kindness. Likewise, both of the dualistic natures, Christ and the princess, are not explicitly seen to the mere hypothetical eye. Instead, they mix and conflict within a person’s mind, though only one (the naturally human personality) can be physically seen. That naturally human personality could be decisively thought to be the barbaric side, as seen in Christ, but it seems to fluctuate in definition in the princess’ case. Both her characters of savagery and kindness are considered human characters, but it’s the outbalancing of one over the other that would be expressed on the outside. Thus, the final choice all depends on her siding of either her barbarism or her humanity.

Being Hunted

Don't know what your expecting from me.I'm lost in the Darkness.Just can't let you in.Might lose control any second.Feeling so Numb, Feeling so Helpless, and Feeling so Dead.Unexpected guests are never good.Its usually me, they're always after.Or was it just my alluring Pure Blood?I was told to live my Life.I never expected this!The Hunter has become the Hunted instead.Typically I'm left alone.Left to fend for myself.I'm the Last of My Own Kind.

<http://quizilla.teennick.com/poems/8945748/being-hunted>



<http://www.fahrenheit211.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/reverse_evolution.jpg>

The Most Dangerous Game

The poem almost perfectly mirrors the plot of the short story *The Most Dangerous Game* by Richard Connell; the narrator of the poem could be thought of as the protagonist, Rainsford. The poem exemplifies the feeling of fear that Rainsford felt as General Zaroff was trying to find him. In addition, it mentions “The Hunter has become the Hunted instead”, which is true in the sense that Rainsford, himself a hunter, was being hunted by Zaroff. Furthermore, the poem tells about keeping the unnamed hunter out of his head to maintain his own peace of mind. Likewise, Rainsford constantly reminded himself to not lose his nerve, even as Zaroff taunted him with threats and teases of coming back soon to get his prey. The final three sentences of the poem sum up Rainsford’s ultimate victory over Zaroff, as he stayed alive. The ending phrase seems to match the feeling that Rainsford is the only civilized (and living) entity on the island, and also that the only others to live on the island were maniacal, barely human, killer freaks.

The rendition of reverse evolution fortifies the idea of General Zaroff’s ironic beliefs of humanity in the short story *The Most Dangerous Game* by Richard Connell. In the story, Zaroff explains that he had become too advanced a hunter for mere animals in the wild. He wanted to go beyond his boundaries, and perhaps a little too far past. His ideal game (in both the hunting and playing definitions) was hunting down other humans. Zaroff’s barbarism seems to contradict his own idea that he was the higher being; in reality, it is more that he has really reverted back to a primitive, savage form. Thus, instead of becoming a higher human, Zaroff really went back down the sequence of human evolution.

# A Season in Hell by [Arthur Rimbaud](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/1268)

A while back, if I remember right, my life was one long party where all hearts were open wide, where all wines kept flowing.

One night, I sat Beauty down on my lap.—And I found her galling.—And I roughed her up.

I armed myself against justice.

I ran away. O witches, O misery, O hatred, my treasure's been turned over to you!

I managed to make every trace of human hope vanish from my mind. I pounced on every joy like a ferocious animal eager to strangle it.

I called for executioners so that, while dying, I could bite the butts of their rifles. I called for plagues to choke me with sand, with blood. Bad luck was my god. I stretched out in the muck. I dried myself in the air of crime. And I played tricks on insanity.

And Spring brought me the frightening laugh of the idiot.

So, just recently, when I found myself on the brink of the final *squawk!* it dawned on me to look again for the key to that ancient party where I might find my appetite once more.

Charity is that key.—This inspiration proves I was dreaming!

"You'll always be a hyena etc. . . ," yells the devil, who'd crowned me with such pretty poppies. "Deserve death with all your appetites, your selfishness, and all the capital sins!"

Ah! I've been through too much:-But, sweet Satan, I beg of you, a less blazing eye! and while waiting for the new little cowardly gestures yet to come, since you like an absence of descriptive or didactic skills in a writer, let me rip out these few ghastly pages from my notebook of the damned.

  
<http://speakupforsuccess.com/3940/interview-coaching/>

The Lottery

The poem by Arthur Rimbaud identifies with the idea of awaiting death in Shirley Jackson’s short story *The Lottery*. In the beginning of both the poem and the short story, the setting is happy and worry-free. However, all happiness comes to an abrupt halt, as “every trace of human hope vanishes,” when “Spring brought a frightening laugh of the idiot.” The lines from the poem exemplify the evil lurking underneath the seemingly joyous atmosphere. The narrator of the poem and Tessie Hutchinson share the ultimate fate of death, even though they differ in their attitude towards their finale. However, both ask for their own death, whether or not they expected it. The poem narrator openly calls for an executioner, while Tessie’s incessant complaints about the lottery foreshadow her very likely death from winning the lottery.

The picture of waiting before, or after, a job interview shares the very anxious mood seen in Shirley Jackson’s short story *The Lottery*. In the short story, the whole town stands in wait during the lottery, hoping not to be chosen as the “winner.” Even though the reasons for anxiety are different between the waiting room and the lottery, the subjects of each situation all focus on who would be chosen (whether or not being chosen is a good thing). Among both cases, the period before the event is relatively relaxed, the feeling of confidence walking in to an interview or the beginning of summertime in *The Lottery*. However, once it begins, the emotions instantly transform from general happiness to fear, nervousness, and worries; in the midst of an interview or walking up to pick up a lottery paper. Once the process is over, the only thing left to do is to wait for the ultimate results: getting the job or winning the glorious prize of mass stoning.

### A Doomed Fate by Esther Hyams

A week before Chapuys and Cromwell’s surreptitious, secret talks  
Anne felt a terrible ominous foreboding, like a shadow that stalks.  
Henry explained to Jane, his new sweetheart, without contention  
That news of their relationship had not escaped public attention.

A new member of the King’s Privy Chamber was Edward Seymour  
A tribute that meant royal favour was on the Boleyn’s no more.  
It was an honour indicating which way the royal wind was blowing  
The King counselled Jane to be calm, when talk was overflowing.

This is when Henry sent a letter to Jane along with gold sovereigns  
Like with Anne, he said that he wanted no other to be close to him.  
Henry ended the letter to Jane with love Anne would have despised  
For they were gallant flourishes that the Queen would have recognised.

But Jane Seymour modestly kissed the letter and refused the gifts  
Although the honour of this she said, did make her spirits lift  
She said that she was a moral gentlewoman devoid of reproach  
And on her virtue and pure chastity she would never encroach.

King Henry was not put off, but enchanted by this pure rejection  
Such innocence, opposite to his dark queen, enflamed his affection.  
This blushing reserve enflamed his ardour, as hot as the summer sun  
Just as the evocative, seductive words of Anne Boleyn had once done.

Henry said he would only see Jane Seymour if her relatives were there  
But Henry VIII was always sentimental at the beginning of his affairs.  
As most felt that his second marriage had been against God’s law  
It would be easy to be rid of a woman the people called a ‘whore’.

Toward the Boleyn’s, especially Anne, there had been such hate  
How easy it would be to bring down on the Queen a doomed fate!  
Only now was it possible and safe to express such hate and fears  
This news would bring Queen Anne Boleyn such terror filled tears.

 <http://thereyouare.org/category/mindfulness/>

Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?

This poem can be interpreted to resemble the persistence of Arnold Friend to win Connie’s heart, in Joyce Carol Oates’ short story *Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?* In this case, Arnold’s undying obsession with Connie relates to the king’s fondness for Jane Seymour. Both “wanted no other to be close to him,” while the women refuse their offers, though Connie happened to do so in a much for aggressive manner. However, Arnold and king aren’t “put off, but enchanted by this pure rejection, which enflamed their affection.” This determination appears creepy and really quite frustrating, yet they continue, even if it were a violation of popular sympathy.

This picture of Pepé le Pew and Penelope, from the Looney Tunes, portrays, in a much more lighthearted tone, the situations between Arnold Friend and Connie in Joyce Carol Oates’ short story *Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?* Arnold, characterized by Pepé, has Connie, seen as Penelope, completely cornered with relentless affection, where she has nowhere to run. Even as Connie explicitly tells Arnold to go away, he just gets even more resolute on winning her over, just as Pepé would. As Connie is at the precipice of potential death and unable to escape Arnold’s quite frightening trap, overwhelming fear and emotions soon take over her own judgment, and eventually finds herself going with Arnold.

Girl (excerpt) by Jamaica Kincaid

“Wash the white clothes on Monday and put them on the stone heap; wash the color clothes on Tuesday and put them on the clothesline to dry; don't walk barehead in the hot sun; cook pumpkin fritters in very hot sweet oil; soak your little cloths right after you take them off; when buying cotton to make yourself a nice blouse, be sure that it doesn't have gum on it, because that way it won't hold up well after a wash; soak salt fish overnight before you cook it; is it true that you sing benna in Sunday school ?; always eat your food in such a way that it won't turn someone else's stomach; on Sundays try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming; don't sing benna in Sunday school; you mustn't speak to wharf-rat boys, not even to give directions; don't eat fruits on the street - flies will follow you; *but I don't sing benna on Sundays at all and never in Sunday school*; this is how to sew on a button; this is how to make a buttonhole for the button you have just sewed on; this is how to hem a dress when you see the hem coming down and to prevent yourself from looking like the slut you are so bent on becoming; this is how you iron your father's khaki shirt so that it doesn't have a crease; this is how you iron your father's khaki pants so that they don't have a crease…”



<http://satireofmodernsociety.blogspot.com/>

Orientation

The short story (arguably a poem) *Girl* by Jamaica Kincaid shares a very similar structure and wording as the short story *Orientation*, by Daniel Orozco. Aside from the usage of semicolons versus periods, both short stories include very droning instructions and directions. In Girl, these instructions are from a mother to her daughter, giving her life advice about a woman’s duties and proper feminine etiquette. In *Orientation*, a new employee is given a tour of the office floor, where everything is located, when to or not to do something, and the backgrounds of everyone working on the floor. The stories have a “this is this, this is that, that is that…” kind of tone to them, where the speaker doesn’t seem to have a passion behind what they say, and the target of the speech isn’t given much of a presence.

The picture is a satire of the modern world, similar to in the short story *Orientation* by Daniel Orozco. The narrator of the story can seems of represent that problematic population of the 21st Century. Today’s society can be seen to have a ton of issues, whether it’s global warming or Barry Hacker’s haunted dead wife. Despite all of these clearly seen problems, everything is so easily brushed off as if it were just a speck of dust. Nowadays, people know so much about the world that really is supposed to be left a secret, like all the employees’ personal lives in *Orientation*, and it’s all treated as completely irrelevant. As the tides of concerns continue to rise, we simply stay in the waters with the assurances of “a comprehensive health plan” that covers every expense.